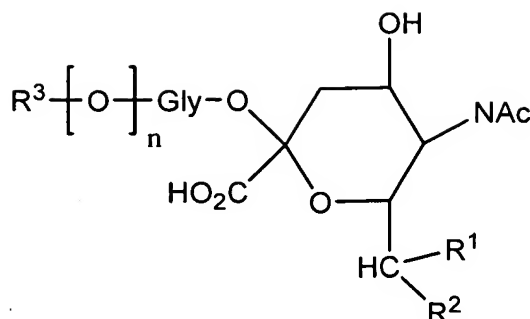


Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 3-6, 8-11, 14, 20, 22, 24, 26, 29 and 30, and cancel claims 13 and 28, as indicated below. The claims listing below replaces all previous listings.

1. (currently amended) A compound comprising a polysaccharide having at least two sialic acid units ~~joined~~ linked 2,8 and/or 2,9 to one another and having a pendant moiety linked to at least one terminal unit derived from a sialic acid unit which includes a functional group selected from N-maleimide groups, vinylsulphone groups, N-iodoacetamide groups and orthopyridyl disulphide groups.
2. (original) A compound according to claim 1 in which the pendant moiety is linked at the reducing terminal unit of the polysaccharide.
3. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ in which the moiety is linked at the non-reducing terminal unit of the polysaccharide.
4. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 in which the said pendant moiety comprises an alkanediyl group and/or an arylene group and a linkage optionally in combination with a oxalkylene or oligooxa-alkylene group which is a secondary amine linkage, a hydrazone, an alkyl hydrazide linkage or a peptide linkage.
5. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 in which the functional group is N-maleimido.
6. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 in which the polysaccharide is a polysialic acid.
7. (original) A compound according to claim 6 in which the polysaccharide consists substantially of only sialic acid units.
8. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1 which has the formula



in which one of the following groups of definitions apply:

i) R^1 is H or -CHOHCH₂OH, R^2 is OH and R^3 is either -CH₂CHR⁴R⁵ or -CH(CH₂OH)CHR⁴R⁵ in which R^4 and R^5 together represent =N-NR⁶ or R^4 is H and R^5 is -NR⁶R⁷ in which R^6 is an organic group comprising the said functional group or is H and R^7 is H or R^6 and R^7 together are a 1,3-but-2-enedioyl group;

ii) R^1 and R^2 together represent =N-NR⁶ or R^1 is H and R^2 is -NR⁶R⁷ in which R^6 is an organic group comprising the said functional group or is H and R^7 is H or R^6 and R^7 together are a 1,3-but-2-enedioyl group;

R^3 is H;

Gly-O is a glycosyl (~~saccharine~~) group;

n is 0 or more; and

Ac is acetyl.

9. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 7 in which each Gly Gly-O is a sialic acid unit.

10. (currently amended) A compound comprising a protein with at least one ~~free~~ cysteine unit and, linked through a thioester bond to the side chain of the cysteine unit, ~~with a~~ polysialic acid, joined through a ~~moiety joined at one or each terminal unit~~ units of the polysialic acid.

11. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 in which the polysaccharide has at least 10 saccharide units.

12. (original) A compound according to claim 11 which has at least 50 saccharide units.
13. (cancelled)
14. (currently amended) A process in which a polysaccharide having at least two sialic acid units ~~joined~~ linked 2,8 and/or 2,9 to one another and comprising at least one terminal unit which is derived from a sialic acid unit is reacted with a heterobifunctional reagent having a first functional group selected from N maleimido ~~groups~~, vinylsulphone ~~groups~~, ~~N-iodoacetamide groups~~ N-iodoacetamido and orthopyridyl disulphide ~~groups~~ and a second functional group different from the first group whereby the said second functional group reacts with a terminal sialic acid derivative unit to form a covalent bond therewith and form a functional polysaccharide suitable for selective conjugation to a thiol group.
15. (original) A process according to claim 14 in which the said second functional group is a nucleophilic group.
16. (original) A process according to claim 15 in which the nucleophilic group is hydrazine.
17. (original) A process according to claim 14 in which the terminal unit of the polysaccharide has a carbonyl group which reacts with said nucleophilic group.
18. (original) A process according to claim 14 in which the said second functional group is an electrophilic group.
19. (original) A process according to claim 18 in which the electrophilic group is an N-alkoxycarbonyl-imide or carbodiimide moiety.
20. (currently amended) A process according to claim 18 ~~or 19~~ in which the terminal unit of the polysaccharide has an amine group which reacts with said electrophilic group.
21. (original) A process according to claim 20 in which a peptide or urethane linkage is formed.

22. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 14-21~~ claim 14 in which the reagent comprises a bifunctional organic group linking the first and second functional groups.

23. (original) A process according to claim 22 in which the bifunctional organic group is selected from a C₂₋₁₈-alkanediyl group, an arylene group, an oligo peptide and an oligo(alkoxy)alkyl group.

24. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 14 to 23~~ claim 14 in which the first functional group is a N-maleimide group.

25. (currently amended) A process according to claim 14 in which the reagent has the general formula



in which:

X is a N-maleimido, N-iodoacetamido, S-vinylsulphonyl or S orthopyridydisulphide group,

R is alkane-diyl, arylene, ~~or~~ aralkylene alkarylene, alkylene-oxaalkylene, ~~or~~ alkylene-oligooxa-alkylene or alkyl-oligopeptidyl-alkyl group; and

Y is a hydrazide, amine or N- hydroxysuccinimide group.

26. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 14 to 25~~ claim 14 in which the polysaccharide acid has at least 10 sialic acid units.

27. (original) A process according to claim 26 in which the polysaccharide has at least 50 sialic acid units.

28. (cancelled)

29. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 14 to 28~~ claim 14 in which the maleimido-functional polysialic acid is reacted with a polypeptide or a protein having at least one free unprotected Cys unit whereby the maleimide group forms a

thioether linkage with the thiol group of a Cys unit to form a polysialylated polypeptide or protein.

30. (currently amended) A process in which a compound according to ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1 is reacted with a polypeptide or a protein having at least one free and unprotected Cys unit whereby the said functional group forms a thioether linkage with the thiol group of a Cys unit to form a conjugate of the polysaccharide with the polypeptide or protein.